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How Beautiful Are The Feet.....
My blog as a stateside Catholic missionary, inspired by Romans 10:15

India Mission Trip – July 2014 – part 5 – Mission: Pune

Posted on August 20, 2014 by sidsavoie

(/web/20140926072014/https://cajunmissionary.files.wordpress.com/2014/08/10592952_10152445756122874_7276498108876610371_n.jpg)
one of the first things i saw when i got to the guys apt in Pune

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living room at the apt where i stayed. like the rest of the house, quite humble, but comfy and cozy as well

So our time in Pune was markedly different than our time in Calcutta. While the housing was a little nicer (apts instead of hostel), I did have to re-learn how to take cold-water bucket showers, a skill I had first developed on that Africa mission trip back in '97. The weather, however, was way better over here. Now that monsoon season has arrived, the daily rains and cloud cover really cool things off quite a bit. Pune is also further inland, so even though temps can get warm its still not nearly as humid. In Calcutta I'd be pouring buckets of sweat within 10 minutes of leaving the hostel. Over here, I think I can count on one hand with a few fingers left over the amount of times I've actually sweated. And while I grew up in the jungle heat of southern Louisiana and still live there, and while I much prefer hot weather to cold weather, keep in mind that A.) I'm used to always having AC, and 2.) less hotness is better than more hotness, in regards to the weather. Now you can see why I like it in Pune so much more, at least as far as the weather is concerned.

(/web/20140926072014/https://cajunmissionary.files.wordpress.com/2014/08/10458330_10152445756247874_7601724762753827245_n.jpg)
kitchen. notice the luxurious 2-burner "stove"

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it may not be the Hilton, but after a long tiring day of mission work, it was the most comfortable bed ever

However, to be fair, I have to say that I was only in Calcutta for a week. And whether we're talking in terms of weather or whatever other factor, I think I could gradually grow to like Calcutta a little more if I had the chance to spend some more time there. Pune has decidedly better traffic than Calcutta, although it still isn't' the best. It's also cleaner and less noisy. Drivers here only use their horns when needed. Calcutta drivers practically lay on their horns 24/7. I even think that if their care horns didn't work, then brains would go foggy and they just wouldn't be able to function or figure out how to drive, even if the rest of their car functioned perfectly fine.

(/web/20140926072014/https://cajunmissionary.files.wordpress.com/2014/08/10438416_10152445762872874_1528116002453217154_n.jpg)

common occurence during the mission trip: negotiating with a rickshaw driver to get to/from a ministry event

Our ministry in Pune was also different , not better (cuz it's all good and necessary) just different. Aside from the huge differences in the cities themselves, in Pune things are driven heavily by the lives of the missionaries who live and work here full time. A big part of ministry here is in Ramtekdi slum. It's a slum where one of our local friends (who is kinda like one of our honorary missionaries) is from. He's a huge help to us, both in translating to/from Hindi, as well as actual ministry itself. In the slum, we work in a small 2 room building that is rented by the Cathedral parish that we work with. There, we do prayer meetings as well as "tuitions", which is tutoring the local school kids. We also do home visits, and bring dispensas to people in the slum. It's amazing to see the relationships that have been built by our missionaries there. As I just mentioned, some of our local friends are a HUGE help to the ministry here.

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Ramtekdi slum

Please pray for 3 of them in particular, who are praying and discerning , and are in various stages of the process of trying to join and come to be with FMC in Louisiana for Intake and to go into foreign missions. We're also blessed with another local couple who are great friends and co-laborers in the vineyard. They also come to some of our prayer meetings and help to lead music/worship as well as translating. They also have an amazing ministry on their own. They offer housing and assistance to some of the girls from the nearby slum. They tutor them in English, and Hindi (and maybe some other languages) as well as teaching them how to cook, clean, run a house, and all types of other practical skills. They also offer them a life of focus, discipline, and direction. Lest we forget the most important part, they also minister to them by prayer, Bible teachings, etc.....

(/web/20140926072014/https://cajunmissionary.files.wordpress.com/2014/08/10530877_10152445780732874_4758705460204793778_n.jpg)
children's prayer ministry in the slum

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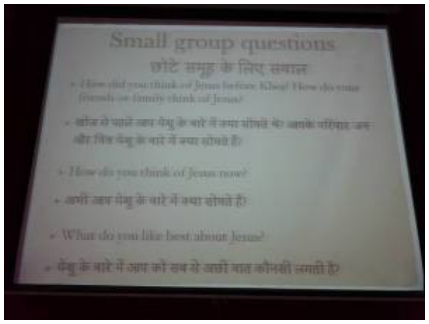
sharing a teaching

They are such an amazing, joyful, hospitable, and holy couple. I was really blessed to be able to meet them and I pray that God continues to bless their ministry. I also really enjoyed the fact that even though they were of a different Christian denomination, we still worked together as well. It is definitely a thing of God. In India, Christians have to stick together, because they are such a vast minority. There's a certain kinship and brotherhood because we are all in the same boat. And I think this closeness and collaboration will one day ultimately lead to the Christian unity that we all seek.

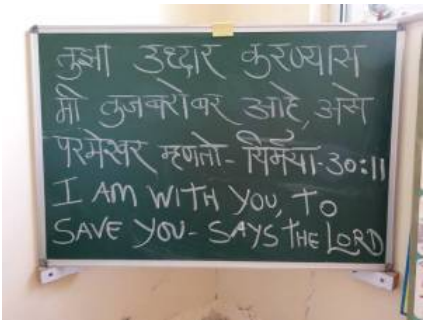
(/web/20140926072014/https://cajunmissionary.files.wordpress.com/2014/08/1907388_10152447900942874_2269877732420065491_n.jpg)
RCIA ministry at the Cathedral


Small group questions
छोटे समूह के लिए सवाल
• How did you think of Jesus before Him? How do your friends or family think of Jesus?
• How do you think of Jesus now?
• What do you like best about Jesus?

(/web/20140926072014/https://cajunmissionary.files.wordpress.com/2014/08/10421391_10152447900972874_8300638588126267893_n.jpg)

Another big part of the ministry here was based at the Cathedral. Our missionaries here help out with the RCIA program. To American Catholics, this doesn't sound like a big deal because RCIA is so prominent and common place in our parishes. But in India, it is one of only 3 RCIA programs in the entire country! What is even more unique is the approach they take. Back home in the US, most people coming into the Church are from other Christian churches. But here, most people coming into the church are from non-Christian faiths, mainly Hinduism and Islam. So the program was developed by a convert (forget if he was Hindu or Muslim or whatever else)

and is tailored to teach the Catholic faith, in an orthodox manner of course, to people who for the most part come from a totally different faith and mindset. It's a truly amazing and unique ministry and I pray that it continues to bear much more fruit and that many more parishes would adopt this program.



(/web/20140926072014/https://cajunmissionary.files.wordpress.com/2014/08/10359225_10152445762622874_6082203120292726007_n.jpg)
Bible passage in Hindi and in English, the 2 main languages of India

Categories: Uncategorized | Tags: Africa, Bible, Calcutta, cathedral, Catholic, Christian, Family Missions Company, FMC, Hilton, Hindi, Hindu, Hinduism, India, Islam, jungle, Louisiana, Ministry, mission, missionaries, missionary, missions, monsoon, Muslim, Pune, RCIA, rickshaw, slum | Leave a comment

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